

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD AFRICAN-AMERICAN OFFICERS: MAKING THEM MORE COMPETITIVE

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**ARMY NATIONAL GUARD AFRICAN-AMERICAN OFFICERS: MAKING THEM
MORE COMPETITIVE**

by

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ABSTRACT

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Over the past two decades, the career progression of African-American Army Officers – their representation in the officers' corps, and their rates of promotion – has been an area of strategic concern for the force. This Strategy Research Project (SRP) examines the career status and progress of African-American officers in the Army National Guard (ARNG). It is built on several recent monographs which found that "Black Officers are falling behind their white counterparts in promotions at and above the rank of lieutenant colonel at a disconcerting rate." This SRP examines the current status of African-American officers in the Army National Guard based on analysis of institutional data. It examines how well senior African-American officers are faring at the highest levels and examines the reasons for their successes or failures. This SRP offers recommendations to the ARNG senior leadership for ways to improve the overall readiness of the ARNG by building a more competitive corps of African-American Officers.

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD AFRICAN-AMERICAN OFFICERS: MAKING THEM MORE COMPETITIVE

Our nation needs the most diverse workforce it can have to be the most efficient and effective ... This is a subject that never can be declared victory upon. It's about the art - not the science - of dealing with individuals.

—Gen. Craig R. McKinley
National Guard Bureau Chief

Currently the Army National Guard (ARNG) does not have a systemic process in place to ensure that African-American officers are not falling behind their white counterparts in promotions at and above the rank of lieutenant colonel. Additionally, the ARNG has no written guidance or policies addressing the establishment of mentorship programs for African-American officers in order to ensure diversity throughout the ranks. This Strategy Research Project (SRP) holistically reviews the ARNG's officer career management system through the lens of current African-American officers and gives recommendations for ways to improve the overall readiness of the ARNG by building a more competitive corps of African-American Officers.

The ARNG needs to become more transparent throughout their promotion systems so that all service members may better understand performance expectations and promotion criteria and processes. In addition, the ARNG needs to develop a strategic communication plan to promote diversity and hold leaders at all levels accountable for their actions to develop future leaders. African-American officers are part of an underrepresented demographic group, with this being the case, ARNG leaders should be held responsible to recruit and mentor more minority officers. The ARNG and current African-American officers should personally commit to making diversity an institutional priority. In Figure 1 below,

the NGB uses a big star to indicate that the ARNG has met its most recent goals for diversity. As a current member of the ARNG and former commander in the Recruiting and Retention Command, I know we are a long way from truly achieving diversity in the ARNG. Diversity is not only about meeting your recruiting force numbers; it is also about developing and giving minority officers their opportunity for career growth. With the right kind of institutional support, minorities will become competitive senior officers along with their fellow officers. In this SRP, the designations African-American and Black officers are used interchangeably.

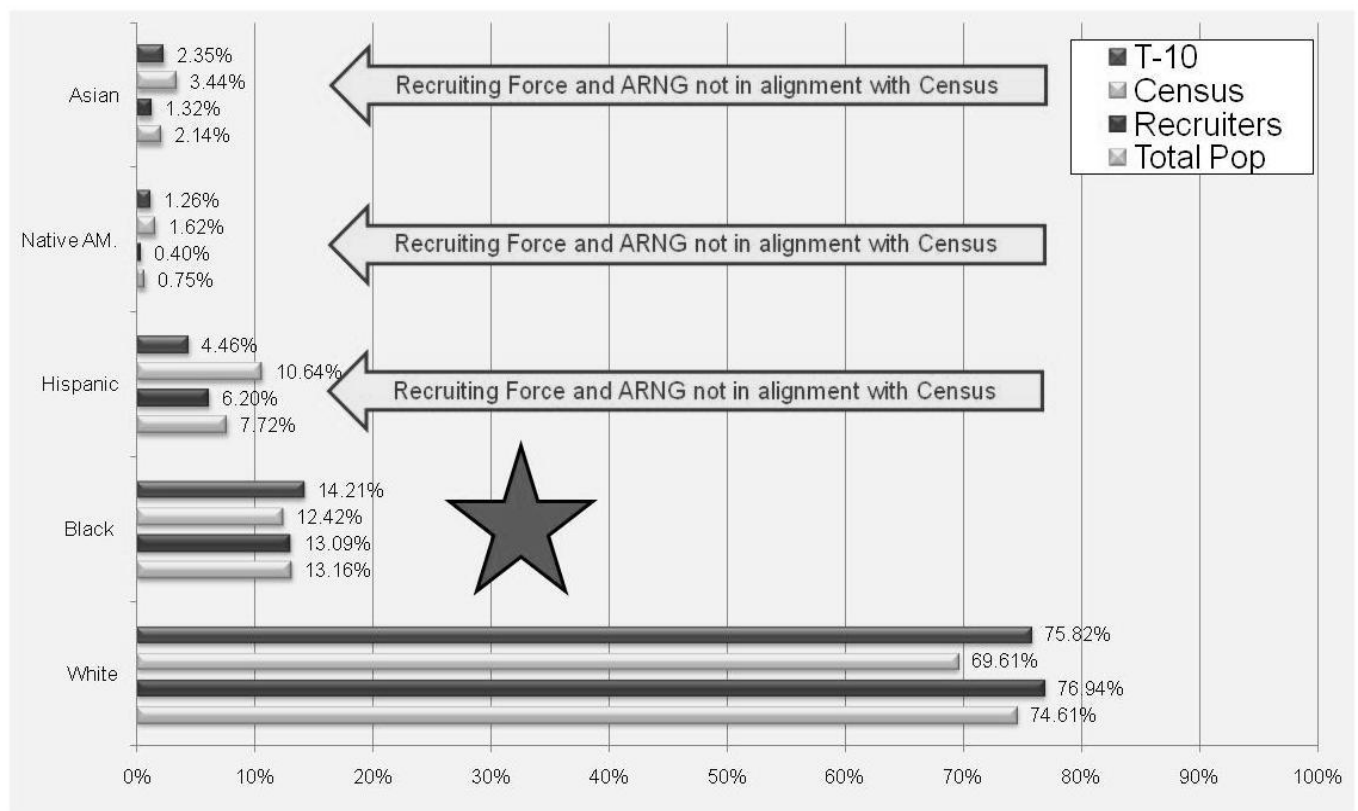


Figure 1: ARNG Diversity Goals¹

Charles Moskos and John Sibley Butler have suggested that the Army is a meritocracy and is a national leader in diversifying its' ranks. Moskos and Butler go so far as to state that of the Army, "It is the only place in American life where whites are routinely bossed around by blacks."² They and others who espouse this claim routinely point out three facts. First, that the Army was one of the first U. S. institutions to integrate blacks and whites in response to President Harry Truman's Executive Order 9981.³ Second, those blacks have risen to the highest levels of command in the U. S. Army, citing General Colin Powell's appointment as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Finally, that a black man has risen to the rank of Commander in Chief, President Barrack Obama. While these facts are indisputable, it is also true that the second and third points are anomalies.

According to Colonel Smith, Moskos and Butler described an Army that they saw as an ideal for African-Americans. In their vision, the Army was a place where African-Americans could rise to the highest levels of an inclusive organization that valued their unique cultural perspective.⁴ However, at the same time that Moskos and Butler came to the conclusion that the Army was akin to a diversity utopia, Colonel Remo Butler, then a student at the U.S. Army War College, came to a very different conclusion. He believed that Black officers were not living in a utopia; he argued that indeed his Black comrades were failing. "Black officers are falling behind their white counterparts in promotions at and above the rank of lieutenant colonel at a disconcerting rate."⁵ Could the same thing be happening in the ARNG? Before we inquire further into this issue, consider the following background information on the ARNG.

Background Information

The ARNG is made up of units in 54 states and territories. The National Guard Bureau serves as a resource organization for the states and territories. The NGB does not have command authority over the states' ARNG units. This organizational structure has sometimes created friction between NGB and the states in the areas of manning, equipping and resource management. The ARNG military officer corps is facing profound challenges. Addressing them will require vision, imagination and energy over a sustained period of time. The issues raised in this essay about African-American officers are intended to mark the beginning of a conversation about those challenges and opportunities, acknowledging that effective reform is an evolutionary and progressive process.

Even with all of the challenges that the ARNG continues to face, it has always met its overall recruiting and retention missions. As of 03 February 2011, the Army National Guard's strength numbers are as follows: NGB end strength target is 358,200; it's actual and strength 363,997 - 100.8%. However, the ARNG minority officer recruiting efforts have not been as successful.

The ARNG is currently above its overall end strength. But the ARNG is having problems recruiting new African-American officers. The ARNG has two major problems in acquiring and developing its African-American Officers: it must provide them with career enhancing assignments immediately after they are commissioned. Then it must develop them into effective 21st century leaders. Currently, they are not being developed or mentored to become the next generation of field grade officers throughout all 54 states and territories. Further, ARNG is not retaining African-American field grade

officers and developing them into the next generation of strategic leaders. Current data indicate an overall major shortage of ARNG field grade officers.⁶

Figure 2 shows the ARNG is failing in officer recruiting and falling short in retaining overall field grade officers. These factors could have a great affect on African-American officers' careers. The chart also shows under the subtitle Growth in Diversity, officers of the rank of 2LT to CPT are trending downward. At the same time, the director's chart in Figure 2 shows CPT to MAJ authorized percent fill is in the RED at 71.6 percent, far short of the goal of 100 percent.

These data affirm that the ARNG has the same diversity problems that previous studies have found in the Active Army. In most cases, the term minority refers to a group of people in the United States who are not part of a white majority. According to the American Heritage Book of English Usage, a minority is, socially speaking, an ethnic, racial, religious, or other group having a distinctive presence within a larger society.⁷ The well-known, Merriam Webster dictionary adds that a minority is "often subjected to differential treatment." It elaborates that a minority group is one that experiences a pattern of disadvantage or inequality; one that shares visible distinguishing traits or characteristics; a community of consciousness; an ascribed status and birth; and a tendency for endogamy (marriage within the group).⁸ In this SRP, minority refers to African Americans, Hispanics, Asian-Pacific Islanders and Native Americans. However, this SRP focuses primarily on African-American officers in order to recommend some options to prepare the Army National Guard for demographic changes in the 21st century.

In the Army, success or failure of minority officers can be determined by four principal determinants: education, developmental assignments, mentoring and the clash of cultures.⁹ These determinants may indicate whether a minority officer is likely to succeed in the Army National Guard.

Officer Recruitment

ARNG officers' recruitment is falling short of the overall goal. The primary requirement for entry into the officer corps in the military is a bachelor's degree from an accredited four-year college or university. However, ARNG offers opportunities for non-college graduates to become commissioned officers through state Officer Candidate Schools or Officer Training School (OCS/OTS). In order for National Guard officer candidates to attend Federal OCS, they must have at least a baccalaureate degree. If the candidates do not have degrees, they can attend a state OCS programs if they have earned at least 90 non-duplicate hours of college credit. There are three forms of OCS programs available to the National Guard Soldier:

State OCS (Traditional)

- Local state's Regional Training Institute or (RTI)
- Weekends only 16-18 months of one weekend a month, plus 2 two-week active periods

NGB Accelerated OCS

- School locations vary by seasonal states
- Eight weeks straight, seven days a week, winter or summer session

Federal OCS

- Fort Benning, Georgia

- 14 weeks, course offered year-round

The primary path to becoming an officer in the Army and the ARNG is through the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program. Accordingly, the ARNG should partner with every historically black college and university (HBCU) ROTC program throughout the nation to increase the pool of African-American officer candidates. Through these partnerships, the ARNG could increase its overall minority officer recruiting numbers just by increasing its footprint on the HBCUs.

Because HBCUs are not in every state, NGB needs to develop a program to track all HBCU ROTC students. If these students join the ARNG, they could provide a link to a new recruiting base for other highly qualified officers. Current African-American O5 to O7 officers who graduated from HBCUs should be the face of the ARNG at these colleges and universities, during ARNG recruiting visits. Students should have the opportunity to talk to current senior African-American leaders about the ARNG. These senior officers could address the importance of education and explain how the professionalism of the ROTC programs will help them become more competitive in their military careers. This action alone could initiate a new mentoring program for the ARNG and a way to develop their future African-American officers. Future ARNG officers could meet their mentors at these recruiting visits. As stated earlier in this paper, the ARNG is currently failing to meet its' goals in minority officer recruiting and overall officer recruiting.

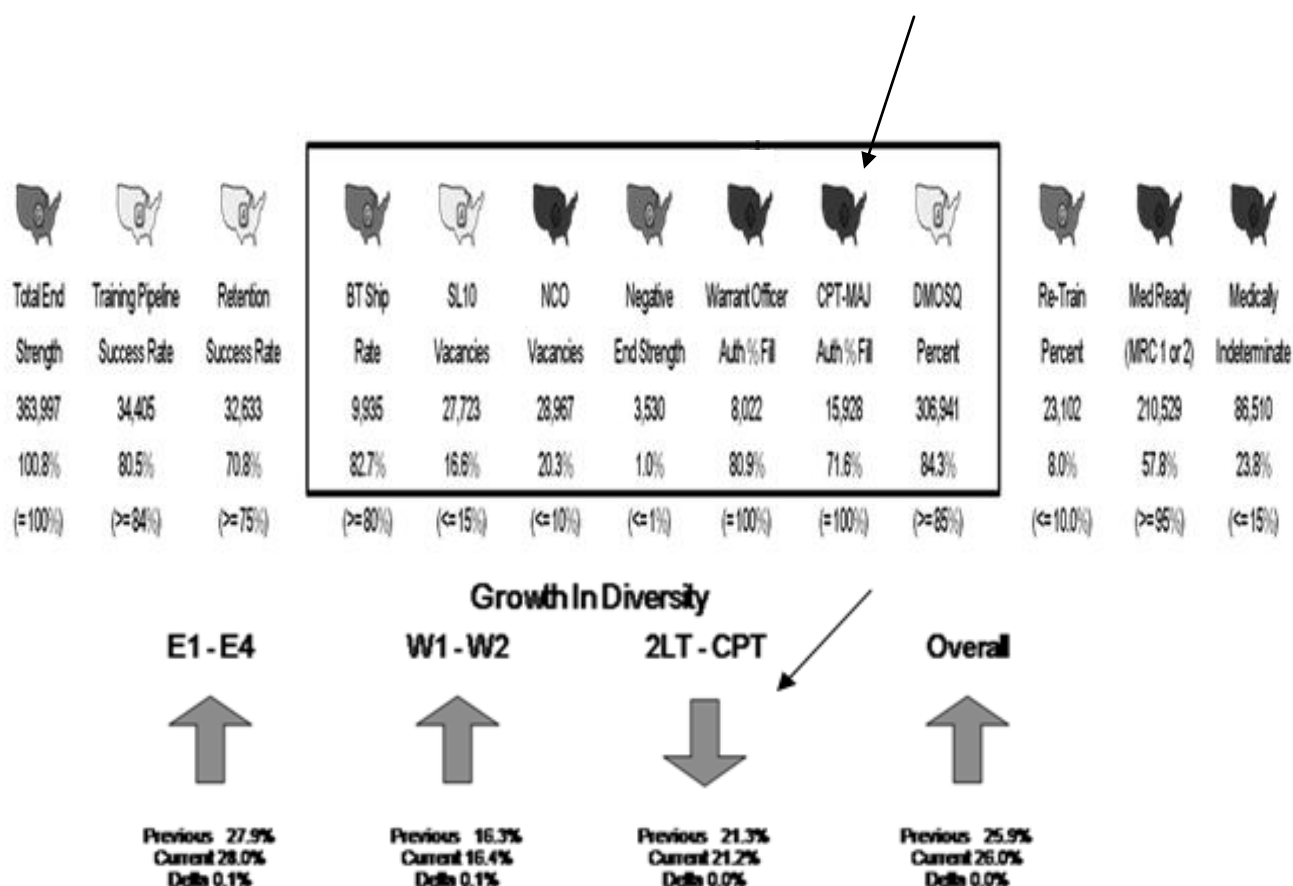


Figure 2: ARNG Director's Slide (Source DPRO 03 Feb 11) ¹⁰

Current Strategic Environment

After conducting a thorough review of U.S. Army War College research papers, this research has identified several papers written about African-American officers. But very few papers are available on African-American officers' career progression issues in the Army National Guard.¹¹ The majority of U.S. Army War College papers have focused on African-American officers or Female officers – analyzing their representation in the Regular Army, their officer promotion rates, their influence on policy and decision-making, and their sub-cultures and diverse contributions to the organization. The ARNG is currently struggling to address these issues and meet the three priorities of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau.

General Craig R. McKinley, Chief of National Guard Bureau, has promulgated three priorities for the Army National Guard:

1. The security and defense of our homeland, at home and abroad.
2. Support for the Global War on Terrorism here and abroad.
3. Transforming the Army National Guard into a relevant, reliable and ready 21st Century operational force. ¹²

How will the National Guard transform itself for the missions of the 21st Century? If we develop a way to improve career progression for the largest minority group (Blacks) within the ARNG, those solutions will also benefit other minorities, including the second largest minority group (Hispanics). This SRP also focuses on current mentorship programs and examines current structure of diversity programs at the NGB level.

The career progression of African-American Army Officers and other minority officers – their representation in the officers' corps, and their rates of promotion – will become an area of strategic concern for the ARNG. It builds on several recent monographs. According to Brigadier General (Ret) Remo Butler, a 1996 U.S. Army War College student, "Black Officers are falling behind their white counterparts in promotions at and above the rank of lieutenant colonel at a disconcerting rate."¹³ It also compares promotion procedures of the Regular Army and the Army National Guard.

Diversity is important at all levels in the Army, including the Army National Guard. The field grade level is of particular concern in this SRP because a stark decrease in the representation of Black officers occurs at this level. In "Why Black Officers Fail" (1996), Brigadier General (Ret) Remo Butler, then a U.S. Army War College student, found that Black officers constituted about 12 percent of the officer corps up to the rank

of major; but in the higher ranks, the percentage decreased by nearly half.¹⁴ Butler found that the opposite was true of white officers; progressing up the ranks, the percentage of white officers also increased by about 10 percent. Current data continue to reflect this pattern.¹⁵

One of the primary concerns of Butler's paper was to examine black officer representation in the active component of the Army, especially the combat arms. In 2006, African Americans comprised about 22 percent of the U.S. Army, but they made up only 12.3 percent of the U.S. Army officer corps and between seven and eight percent of combat arms officers.¹⁶ Furthermore, they represent only 8.18 percent of the general officers in the Army (26 out of 318) totals.¹⁷ According to the Director's Personnel Readiness Overview (DPRO), the situation is much the same in the ARNG: While African-Americans comprise about 13.1 percent of the ARNG officer corps; they make up only 7.6 percent of the ARNG officer corps and 6.46 percent of combat arms officers (1,098 of 16,995). Furthermore, they represent only 7.69 percent of the ARNG general officers currently serving in the ARNG (15 out of 208) totals.¹⁸ These 15 Generals represent only 12 states and territories out of 54 states and territories.

The ARNG is now considered a strategic operational force in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. As the ARNG continues to support these Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO), it must also continue to build its future force. Minority demographics are part of this future. Certainly minority demographic shifts affect the ARNG's ability to recruit and retain African-Americans and other minorities. As these demographic shifts continue, more African-Americans and minorities will become officers in the ARNG. Their career progression will become an

increasingly critical issue. Do we currently have programs that address African-Americans officers' career progression to the general officer level? What are current African-American leaders in the ARNG doing to address these concerns? General Craig R. McKinley, the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, is aware of the need for such programs: "It's incumbent upon our National Guard Bureau team to create the atmosphere, resources and vision to work with the adjutants general ... to make sure that our diversity programs are in line with the Department of Defense instructions and regulations."¹⁹

According to the Pew Research Center, people who regard themselves as Hispanic, Black, Asian, American Indian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander will become the majority by 2042 in the United States. Current projections indicate that by 2050, minorities will account for 53% of the population, but non-Hispanic whites will number only 47% – down from their current 67% share. The Black population will show a slight increase from 12% to 14% of the total.²⁰ The ARNG must prepare for these changes in our nation's demographics.

The following chart entitled Working-Age Population by Race and Ethnicity gives ARNG leaders a clear trend line of the future recruitable population. The ARNG diversity goals are much different from those of the Active Component. The 54 states and territories have different demographics; they need different strategies on how to create the right environment for a diverse Guard. According to the National Guard Association, "How we train, organize and equip our forces requires new thinking, bold approaches, and bold looks so that we can be competitive in today's marketplace."²¹

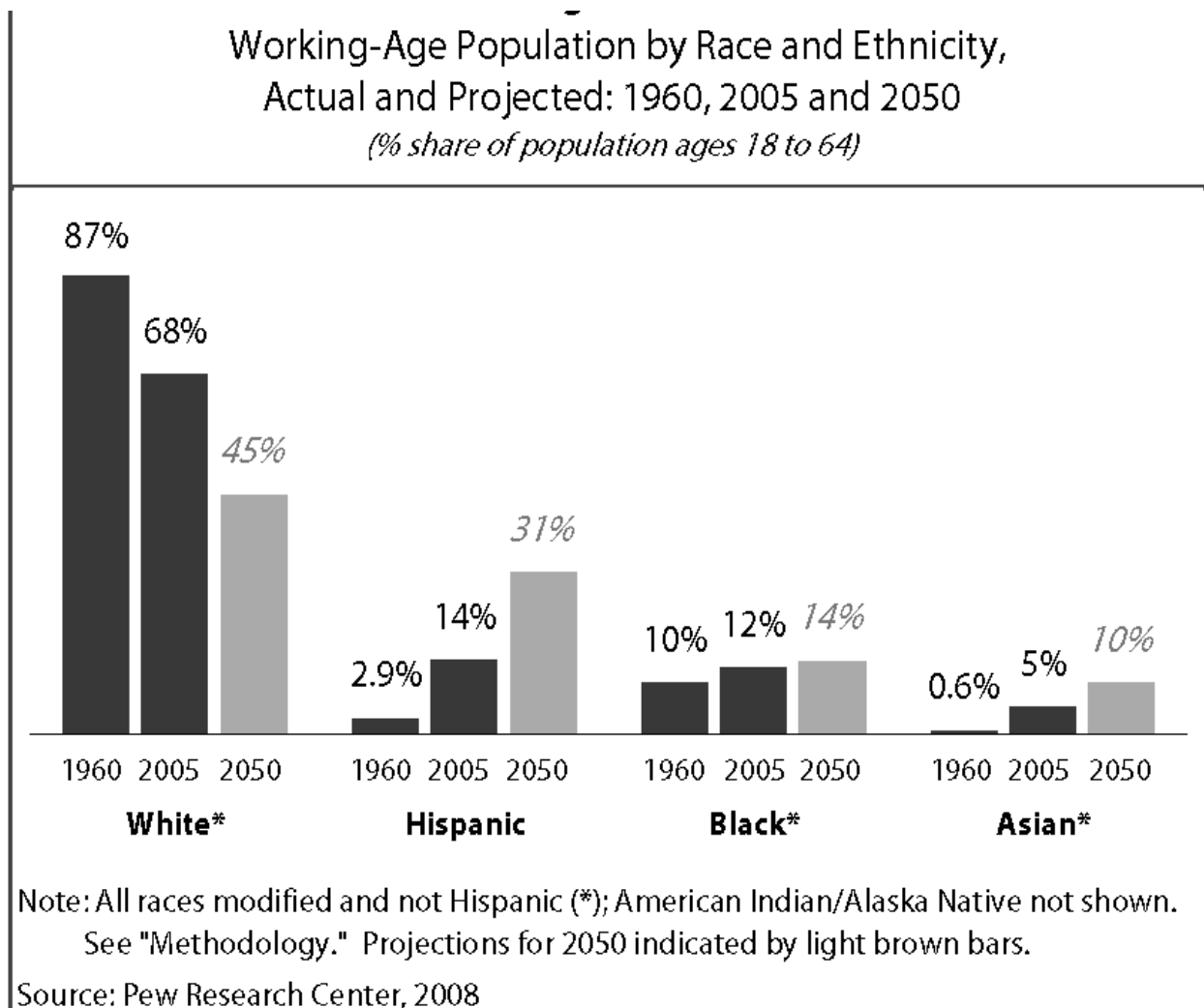


Figure 3:

According to U.S. Census Bureau projections in Figure 3, the U.S. will be even more racially and ethnically diverse by midcentury than it is today. Some highlights of the Census Bureau projections are listed below:²²

- The Hispanic population is projected to nearly triple, from 46.7 million to 132.8 million, during the 2008-2050 period. Its share of the nation's total population

is projected to double, from 14 percent to 30 percent. Thus nearly one in three U.S. residents would be Hispanic.

- The Black population is projected to increase from 41.1 million, or 14 percent of the population in 2008, to 65.7 million, or 14 percent in 2050.
- The Asian population is projected to climb from 15.5 million to 40.6 million. Its share of the nation's population is expected to rise from 5.1 percent to 9.2 percent.

These data underscore the fact that changing demographics, coupled with propensity to serve, will have a profound effect on recruitment and retention for many years to come. As stated earlier in this paper, very few officers have anticipated these changes in the ARNG and have written about them at the U.S. Army War College.

This is one of the first studies to focus on the Army National Guard and African-American Officers' careers. General Craig R. McKinley recently observed that the National Guard faces a unique challenge to diversify and to maintain standards. "The National Guard is a decentralized organization," McKinley said. "Each state, each territory and the District of Columbia have different goals, aspirations and visions for how diversity is applied in each state." General McKinley is also concerned that trends in the way the National Guard is geographically structured may have caused unwanted demographic changes. "As I look around the country and I see the pools that we recruit from, I'm a little nervous that in many of our major cities, many of our United States Army National Guard armories have been displaced from the inner city, not allowing us therefore to recruit that demographic that we did in the 40s, the 50s, the 60s and the 70s."²³ In addition to this issue, the Army National Guard leadership is faced with

issues of mismanagement of officers' careers. The Army National Guard should review all current officer career management policies.

Army National Guard Career Management Policies vs. U.S. Army Policies

U.S. Army policy assures equal opportunity and treatment of Soldiers and their families without regard to race, color, religion, gender, or national origin. This policy applies both on and off post; it extends to Soldiers and their families; it applies to Soldiers' working, living, and recreational environments (including both on- and off-post housing). Soldiers are not accessed, classified, trained, assigned, promoted, or otherwise managed on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or national origin – except for the direct combat probability coding policy that applies to women, and for decisions to support established affirmative action goals.²⁴

Most African-American officers serve under authority of Title 32; however, some serve under Title 10 and work for the NGB at the national level. Figure 4, illustrates the pay statuses of the Soldiers in the Guard; serving under States Active Duty, under Title 32 orders and under Title 10 orders. Most of the Guard members serve under Title 32, which means their command and control comes from their governors. In addition to differences in pay statues, there are also differences in career management policies among the states and NGB. African-American officers and other officers are not clear on these various career management policies.



ARNG Duty Status Comparison

	<u>State Active Duty</u>	<u>Title 32</u>	<u>Title 10</u>
Command & Control	Governor	Governor	President
Where	IAW State Law	CONUS	Worldwide
Pay	State	Federal	Federal
Mission types	IAW State Law (Riot Control, Emergency Response, etc.)	Training, and other Federally Authorized.	Overseas Trng, and as assigned after Mobilization
Discipline	State Military Code	State Military Code	UCMJ
Support Law Enforcement	Yes	Yes	No: Except with specific authority

4 The ARNG 101 Briefing Slides NGB G1/ Manpower

Figure 4.²⁵

ARNG career management policies are fluid at best for Title 32 officers. At this point, officer career management policies are not transparent to the Soldiers. However, NGB has the authority to publish policies. But, NGB often does not follow-up with the states to ensure that officer career management policies are being followed and are current. If officer career management policies are not being followed, African-American officers and other minorities will not know or understand the standards or timelines for promotion. Currently, all 54 states and territories have their own officer career management policies and their own ways to manage their officers' force. The second and third order effects of these current actions will cause African-American officers to

continue to ask the following questions. What are the standards for promotion? What assignments will enable us to get promoted? What schools will enable us to qualify for promotion? When shall I attend them? Why are the promotion criteria not transparent? What are the currently policies for promotion? These questions are being asked by African-American officers throughout the nation. In order, to find some answers to these questions NGB conduct a career field review survey.

The career field review (CFR) survey was conducted by NGB Inspections and Analysis Division in February 2010. Of the 877 individuals surveyed, 718 responded (81.8%). The breakdown by rank is as follows: Title10 Majors 375 (87.8%) of the 427 responded, Title10 Lieutenant Colonels 247 (80.7%) of the 306 responded and Title 10 Colonels 96 (66.7) of the 144 responded.²⁶ In Figures 5 and 6 clearly indicate how Title 10 officers feel about the current CFR. They affirm that it is not transparent or fair. NGB should review all officer career management policies to ensure they are consistent with Regular Army standards. Currently, no Title 32 Soldiers have been given the CFR survey.



Career Field Review (CFR)



Question 24. Rate the CFR process of the following:

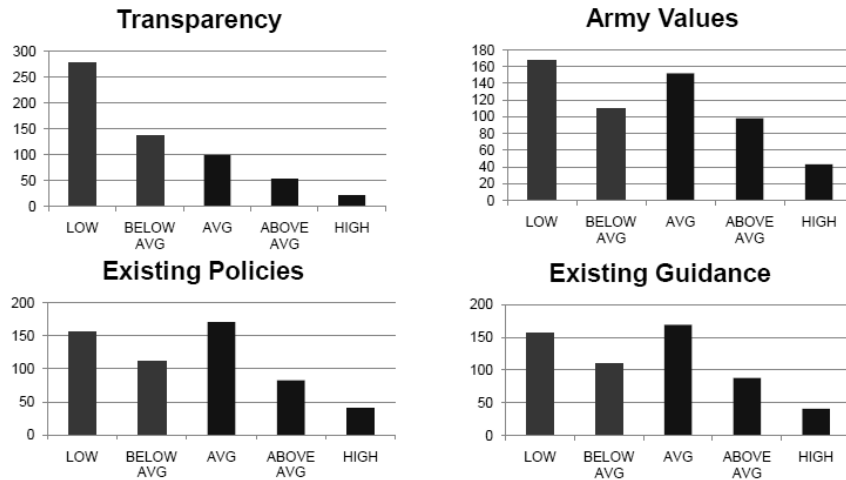


Figure 5: FY 2010 CFR Survey Summary Statistics²⁷

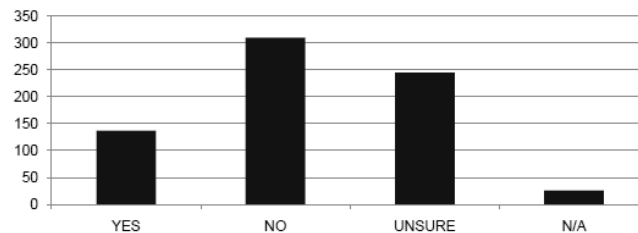


Career Field Review (CFR)



Question 45. (Not used - Deleted from the final survey instrument)

Question 46. Do you think the CFR process is objective and fair?



Question 47. What do you find to be unfair in the process?

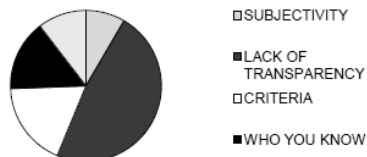


Figure 6:²⁸

Because the U. S. economy is so weak, many officers are losing their civilian jobs and are being forced to relocate to other states for work. In some cases, after getting a new job in another state, some field grade officers are being told there are no ARNG slots for them in their new states or they are told that if they transfer into the new state, they will not be eligible for promotion for some time. They are advised to reestablish themselves in their new states before they can be promoted or assigned to career enhancing schools. As a result, many African-American officers are just transferring to the Army Reserve. The Army National Guard needs to become more transparent in their promotion system, and the NGB must find ways to facilitate state-to-state mobility for ARNG officers.

Evaluation

African-American officers are greatly concerned that their career progression for certain competitive jobs does not comparable to that of their fellow majority officers. Key jobs in the ARNG include command positions and service on primary brigade staffs at state and NGB levels. There is currently no clear path to these key positions in the ARNG today. As of now, in some states, if officers apply for positions at NGB and get them, they are not welcome back to their home states. Because all promotion boards are conducted back in the Soldier's home states, not at NGB, taking positions at NGB could become a career – stopper.

As African-American officers move through the hierarchy of the ARNG, performance evaluations affect their careers. These evaluations focus on their job-related performances. But other factors are also considered, such as leadership abilities, competence, technical knowledge, tactical proficiency, integrity, and team-building. Officer Evaluation Reports (OER) performance evaluations heavily

influence African-American officers' determinations of their future military career opportunities. Often, these evaluations become critical determinants in African-American officers' decisions to stay or leave the ARNG.

The career advancement of an ARNG officer hinges on the current OER system. Like all officers in the ARNG, African-American officers' careers and promotions are often determined by a single document. Col. Keith Maxie, who has studied the officer promotion pipeline, was reported as saying that career success in the Army becomes a problem when young minority officers report to their units and receive little or no guidance on career-enhancing assignments and the importance of OERs. In both the AC and ARNG, weak OERs simply mean officers will not be promoted. However, some young black officers are being told that a weaker OER evaluation "gives them room to grow, and therefore they accept one without questioning it."²⁹ This is not the norm in the ARNG. To address this issue and others, the President and members of Congress established the Military Leadership Diversity Commission to conduct a comprehensive evaluation and assessment of policies and practices that shape diversity among military leaders in the ARNG.

The Military Leadership Diversity Commission has made 20 recommendations to address issues in the National Guard as a whole. These recommendations are addressed to the Chief of the NGB. For purpose of this SRP, only 7 of the 20 recommendations will be cited or highlighted. The following recommendations come, From Representation to Inclusion: Diversity Leadership for the 21st-Century Military Executive Summary³⁰.

Recommendation 4

- DoD and the Services should inculcate into their organizational cultures a broader understanding of the various types of diversity by
 - Making respect for diversity a core value.
 - Identifying and rewarding the skills needed to meet the operational challenges of the 21st century.
 - Using strategic communications plans to communicate their diversity vision and values.³¹

Recommendation 7

- DoD and the Services should engage in activities to improve recruiting from the currently available pool of qualified candidates by
 - Creating, implementing, and evaluating a strategic plan for outreach to, and recruiting from, untapped locations and underrepresented demographic groups.
 - Creating more accountability for recruiting from underrepresented demographic groups.
 - Developing a common application for Service ROTC and academy programs
 - Closely examining the prep school admissions processes and making required changes to ensure that accessions align with the needs of the military.³²

Recommendation 10

- DoD, the Services, and the Chief, National Guard Bureau, must ensure that there is transparency throughout their promotion systems so that

service members may better understand performance expectations and promotion criteria and processes.

To do this they

- Must specify the knowledge, skills, abilities, and potential necessary to be an effective flag/general officer or senior noncommissioned officer.
- Shall formalize the process and requirements for 3- and 4- star officer selection in DoD instruction 1320.4.
- Shall educate and counsel all service members on the importance of, and their responsibility for, a complete promotion board packet.³³

Recommendation 14

- To promote structural diversity, total force integration, and overall retention,
 - DoD must improve the personnel and finance systems affecting transition between Active and Reserve Components and internal Reserve Component transition protocols.
 - The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs and the Service Chiefs must assess how Reserve Component members can more effectively both gain operational experience and fulfill joint requirements within the constraints of their dual military/civilian lives and take action as appropriate.³⁴

Recommendation 15

- The Office of the Secretary of Defense organizational structure must be aligned to ensure a sustained focus on diversity and diversity initiatives and should include establishment of the position of a Chief Diversity Officer who reports directly to the Secretary of Defense.
- The existing “Research and Analysis” office should be directed and resourced to support the Chief Diversity Officer.
- Chief, National Guard Bureau, must establish and resource organizational structures that support DoD diversity initiatives and reinforce ongoing National Guard diversity leadership efforts.³⁵

Recommendation 16

- DoD and the Services must resource and institute clear, consistent and robust diversity management policies with emphasis on roles, responsibilities, authorities, and accountability.
- DoD and the Services shall implement diversity strategic plans that address all stages of a servicemember’s life cycle. Each strategic plan shall include – a diversity mission statement that prioritizes equity and inclusion and provides a purpose that is actionable and measurable – a Concept of Operations to advance implementation.
- DoD must revise (if appropriate), reissue, and enforce compliance with its existing diversity management and equal opportunity policies to
- Define a standard set of strategic metrics and benchmarks that enables the Secretary of Defense to measure progress towards the

goals identified in the strategic plan, including the creation of an inclusive environment.

- Establish standards that allow for the collection of data needed to generate these metrics and the analysis needed to inform policy action.
- Provide oversight of, and support for, the Services' respective diversity initiatives and metrics to ensure that, at a minimum, they align with the end state established by DoD.³⁶

Recommendation 18

- As part of the accountability reviews, the Services, in conjunction with the Chief Diversity Officer (established in Recommendation 15), should conduct annual "barrier analyses" to review demographic diversity patterns across the military life cycle, starting with accessions.
- To ensure comparability across Services, DoD shall establish a universal data collection system, and the analyses of the data should be based on common definitions of demographic groups, a common methodology, and a common reporting structure.

The annual analyses should include

- Accession demographics
- Retention, command selection, and promotion rates by race, ethnicity and gender
- Analysis of assignment patterns by race, ethnicity, and gender
- Analysis of attitudinal survey data by race, ethnicity, and gender

- Identification of persistent, group-specific deviations from overall averages and plans to investigate underlying causes
- Summaries of progress made on previous actions.³⁷

These recommendations will help all officers in the ARNG; they fully address the concerns of African-Americans and other minority and female officers. If the ARNG becomes more transparent in its processes, more African-American, along with other minorities and female officers, will have more opportunities to become generals over time. Currently, NGB senior leadership does not represent the demographics of the ARNG as a whole. However, the ARNG leadership recently named Colonel Timothy McKeithen as the new Chief of Staff of the Army National Guard. Colonel McKeithen is an outstanding African-American officer who has been recently selected for Brigadier General. This is a step in the right direction.

Minorities and Women in Leadership Positions

After 374 years of service to our nation, the Army National Guard is experiencing many firsts in its long history. Consider the following six examples of current and past outstanding minority senior leaders at the brigadier general or major general levels in the Army National Guard today. These great leaders and others have developed mentoring programs for all of their junior officers, focusing on development of minorities and female officers. However, there is no standard for mentorship programs throughout the ARNG. The current trailblazers of today's Guard are as follows:

Female African-American General Officers

1. Brigadier General Margaret S. Washburn – First Female General Officer in the Indiana National Guard December 2, 2007.

2. Brigadier General Julla Cleckley – First African-American Female General Officer in the Army National Guard September 3, 2002.

Male African-American General Officers

1. Major General Joseph C. Carter – First African-American Adjutant General in the Massachusetts National Guard September 2007
2. Brigadier General Owen Moncondult – First African-American General in the Louisiana National Guard February 17, 2009.
3. Brigadier General Rufus J. Smith – First African-American General / Commander 174th Air Defense Artillery Brigade Ohio National Guard January 17, 2009.

All of the above leaders are involved in mentoring future leaders. Their mentoring will help develop the next generation of ARNG officers. Brigadier General Cleckley said it best at her promotion: “Being the first in anything is not worthwhile, if you don’t open doors for others. Being first is not so important unless there is a second and a fourth and a tenth.”³⁸ The Army National Guard has made some progress in the area of diversity, but there is still a lot of work to do. African-American officers in some states have broken through the glass ceiling, but many states are still looking for their first African-American general. The Good Old Boy Network is still alive, well and strong. But the ARNG is working hard to change this culture. In order to change this culture, current African-American senior leaders (LTC to MG) must address issues which are creating barriers for all minority officers throughout the ARNG. Current African-American officers need to develop a standard mentoring program and continue to mentor future leaders on how to progress through successful careers. A successful ARNG diversity program

will have a senior leadership staff whose members reflect their states' racial, gender and ethnic demographics. Future Army War College students will have an opportunity to review the Guard leadership's records and determine if any of afore-mentioned states have promoted their second minority general officers. If so, then the Army National Guard has created a systemic process to promote highly qualified African-American officers. African-American officers are not looking for a handout; they are only looking for fair opportunities throughout their careers. The best African-American officers are willing to take the hard jobs, deploy numerous times, and attend the senior service colleges or pursue fellowships to better prepare themselves for future assignments.

According to Colonel Irving Smith III, the Army must require its senior Black officers to have a stake in the development of its junior Black officers. He proposes a systematic program: First, senior leaders must ask senior Black officers if they are mentoring junior Black officers. Many white officers may naturally feel uncomfortable asking this question; however, it is important for senior Black officers to know that this is imperative. Moreover, people pay attention to what the boss pays attention to. Second, senior leaders must weed out those Black officers who are unwilling to step up to this challenge. There are some senior Black officers who feel no obligation to mentor junior Black officers.³⁹ In The Black Anglo-Saxons, Nathan Hare describes these leaders as Blacks who have "made it" but for some reason have become disconnected from their race.⁴⁰ COL Smith then asserts that senior officers must hold them accountable by asking this question: "What are you doing to help with the problem?" Finally, the Army's senior leaders must place those who are willing to make a difference in the right positions so that they can have an impact. This includes executive command level

positions as well as administrative positions that will expose them to those who can benefit most from their example, mentorship, and passion.⁴¹

ARNG African-American leadership should use COL Smith's advice as a battle cry to inspire them to develop a Guard mentoring program or establish mentor programs throughout the Guard which focus on developing highly qualified minority officers. In order to be fair across the board to all officers, the ARNG needs to develop a Guard-wide mentoring program. Additionally, the Chief of the NGB should add one more priority to his three major priorities for the National Guard of the 21st century: Hold senior leaders responsible for maintaining or developing mentoring programs for all minority leaders throughout the Army National Guard. Minority leaders should always be looking for ways to open doors for other highly qualified leaders. Figure 7 identifies 15 current African-American General Officers in the Army National Guard. As stated earlier in the essay, these Generals represent only 12 states and territories throughout the nation. Many African-American officers have never seen a general officer of color in their states during their careers.

Full Name	Rank	Position MOS	State
BARFIELD ROOSEVELT	O7		DC
BATTS FRANK EDWARD	O8	00B COMMANDER	VA
BOLDEN BARBARANETTE TWILLIE	O7	27A JAG	DC
CARTER JOSEPH CONRAD L	O8	00B ADJUTANT GENERAL / CDR	MA
GORHAM JAMES ROY	O7	00B DIR, JS (JTF CDR)	NC
JENNINGS LEODIS T	O7		NC
JOHNSON WILLIAM JAMES JR	O7	00B ASST ADJUTANT GENERAL	AR
LAKE TIMOTHY LIVINGSTON	O7	01A ASSIGNED EXTRA TDA POS	VI
MONCONDUIT OWEN WAYNE	O7	00B COMMANDER	LA
PAYNE RENWICK L	O7	00B DIR OF THE JOINT STAFF	NY
RIVERA RENALDO	O7	00B ADJUTANT GENERAL/CDR	VI
SCHWARTZ ERROL RICARDO	O8	00B ADJUTANT GENERAL/CDR	DC
SIMPSON LESTER	O7	00B COMMANDER	TX

SMITH RUFUS JEURELL	O7	00B	COMMANDER	OH
WELLS JOE MICHAEL	O7	00B	ASST ADJUTANT GENERAL	GA

Figure 7: Current General Officers in ARNG⁴²

Mentor Programs / Leadership Development

Mentorship, like counseling and coaching, is an evolving construct so it has both old and new components. The ARNG is facing major changes in the organization's structure and its future demographics of strategic leaders. This rapidly changing environment is forcing the ARNG to look for new ways to develop its African-American and other minority officers. As General Shinseki stated in 2000, "If you don't like change, you're going to like being irrelevant even less."⁴³ Since the ARNG has only 15 General officers, obviously this relatively small number of senior minority officers means there are fewer role models for young minorities to emulate – and fewer mentors to show the African-American officers the ropes and the pitfalls.

Mentoring Defined / Mentorship

"Mentor (noun) – a: a trusted counselor or guide; b: tutor, coach"⁴⁴ – This is a very simple dictionary definition of a role that is part of a complex and beneficial relationship. A more elaborate definition identifies a mentor as "anyone who has a beneficial life- or style-altering effect on another person, generally as a result of personal one-on-one contact; one who offers knowledge, insight, perspective, or wisdom that is helpful to another person in a relationship which goes beyond duty or obligation."⁴⁵ The author of this definition also stresses the importance of its being a voluntary relationship of mutual trust and respect.

Mentorship is further defined as a developmental relationship between a more experienced mentor and a less experienced partner, referred to as a mentee (or

sometimes, protégé – a person guided and protected by a more prominent person).

Mentoring works when both parties see the investment in the relationship as worthwhile, fulfilling, and nonthreatening. “It has been said that you can’t hire a mentor. The reason is that the mentor’s expectation of compensation could contaminate the relationship. After all it is difficult to focus exclusively on the needs of the mentee when one’s income is involved.”⁴⁶

As an African-American senior leader in the ARNG today, I have never been part of a genuine mentor / mentee relationship in my service in the Guard. My first introduction to a mentorship program occurred this year at the United States Army War College; when I learned about ROCKS INC. Because there are relatively few senior black officers in the ARNG, there are fewer role models for young black officers to emulate, and few black mentors to show them the ropes and the pitfalls. The Army puts a lot of effort into the mentoring program, but unfortunately most young black officers seem to receive little or no mentoring or counseling except at OER time. Many young black officers don't even realize that they have the right to talk to their senior rater. The ROCKS is one mentorship program that could help develop and make African-American officers competitive for leadership in the ARNG.

ROCKS, Inc. is an organization comprised of active duty, reserve, retired, ROTC cadets, and former commissioned officers of the U.S. Armed Forces, widows and widowers of deceased members, and other uniformed services. The organization was formed to provide professional and social interaction/development to strengthen the officer corps.⁴⁷ This mentor program is not only for African-American or minority officers; it serves all officers throughout the Army.

Recommendation

African-American officers, compared to their white counterparts, do have a problem with promotion rates, retention rates, and selection rates for command assignments in the ARNG. Minority officers are not progressing in rank and responsibilities at the same rate as their white counterparts. Some minority groups appear to be left behind more often than others. This is especially true for African-Americans, who are grossly underrepresented in the ARNG officers corps in proportion to their numbers in the population. The sparse number of African-American officer role models in the ARNG, and the limited access of minorities to adequate mentoring programs can keep minority junior officers from overcoming their lack of awareness of military cultural expectations. The following broad recommendations could make a difference in improving the chances for minority ARNG officers to become more competitive with their white counterparts.

- Review the recommendations from the Military Leadership Diversity Commission in the document entitled, From Representation to Inclusion and implement them immediately in the ARNG.
- Take a more aggressive approach to recruiting and commissioning African-American individuals.
- Require senior ranking African-American officers to serve as role models for ROTC cadets in Historically Black College and Universities (HBCUs) or schools with a high concentration of minority cadets.
- Establish a mentorship program in the ARNG at all levels – unit, state, and NGB.

- Conduct a review and visit to the ROCKS mentoring program in Washington DC for suggestions for mentoring African-American officers.
- Establish a Chief Diversity Officer for the ARNG at the Brigadier General level with a staff to promote diversity throughout the ARNG. This general officer should report only to the Chief of National Guard Bureau.
- Review and structure all military personnel policies so they are consistent with long-term demographic projections of 2050 now.
- Conduct a review to determine the causes of the relative lower promotion among minorities over the past ten years for LTC and above. Reviewing past actions provide a good start for restructuring personnel policies. The review may point to glaring inconsistencies that limit minority promotion. Once the review is complete, if a discrepancy is found, steps should be initiated to eliminate it and prevent it from ever occurring again.
- Commission an outside study on minority officers to determine whether highly competitive officers are leaving the ARNG at a higher rate than majority officers. If so, why?
- Conduct a review to determine how to make more senior positions at NGB available to Black officers with the support of their home States. Open more director positions to the states for three year tours.
- Create a more transparent promotion system.
- Review career board assignments at all level.

Conclusions

The task of answering the question, “How to strengthen African-American Officers’ competitiveness within the Army National Guard?”, presents many challenges. What one African-American Officer considers success may be considered failure by another officer. The ARNG needs to address the issues that African-American officers are facing today in order to prepare the organization for change. Tools that are put in place today will help the ARNG for the 21st century. African-American officers want to lead; otherwise, they would not have made service in the Guard their career choice. They are not asking for guaranteed success; they just want the opportunity to earn it from 2LT to General.

African-American officers want to become successful in the ARNG. However, currently the ARNG needs to review all personnel policies and become more transparent in leadership selection procedures. At the same time, current African-American leaders should start developing mentoring programs throughout the nation for all officers. Individual officers must take responsibility for their own careers and seek out opportunities that are available to them. Historically, the Army and the ARNG has taken pride in its belief that it has set a precedent and has served as an example in terms of its integration and acceptance of minorities. The current Guard leadership is asking, “How can we strengthen African-American officer and all minority officers’ leadership and their competitiveness in the Army National Guard?” Future ARNG War College students should review the progress of the ARNG’s actions in addressing this SRP’s recommendations and those of the Military Leadership Diversity Commission.

Endnotes

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